

Message Text

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ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20

RSC-01 L-03 H-03 EUR-25 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SCA-01 DRC-01 /128 W

----- 010544

R 131100Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9465

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

JCRC NKP THAILAND

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 4705

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOS, LA, CB

SUBJECT: MISSING JOURNALIST

REFERENCE: (A) STATE 125064

(B) VIENTIANE 4058

(C) CHAPMAN/LABOUCHEIX MEMCON POUCHED

TO EA/LC MAY 20, 1974

1. EMBASSY REPORTED FILLOUX'S DISAPPEARANCE BY
REF. B (PARA 3), INDICATING THAT VIENTIANE ICRC
REPRESENTATIVE ZENGER HAD REQUESTED PATHET LAO TO SEEK
INFORMATION ON FILLOUX FROM KHMER ROUGE. FOLLOWING
IS SUMMARY OF OTHER INFORMATION WE HAVE ON THIS CASE:

2. OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE MAY 2 CARRIED ITEM REPORTING
THAT FILLOUX DEPARTED FROM PAKSE SOUTHWARD ON ROUTE 13
ON APRIL 10, AND DID NOT RETURN. BASED ON THIS REPORT,
EMBASSY QUERIED USAID AREA COORDINATOR AT PAKSE MAY 3 FOR
INFORMATION ON FILLOUX'S DISAPPEARANCE. NO INFORMATION
WAS AVAILABLE AT THAT TIME.

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3. ON MAY 10, BANGKOK POST CARRIED UNSOURCED ITEM

REFERRING TO FILLOUX'S DISAPPEARANCE AND INDICATING THAT HIS ENTRY INTO CAMBODIA WAS FACILITATED BY FRENCH PRIEST NAMED "FATHER ANDRE" WHO WORKS WITH TRIBAL PEOPLE ALONG FRINGES OF PATHET LAO ZONE SOUTH OF BOLOVENS PLATEAU. (WE RECALL THAT FATHER ANDRE WAS CAPTURED BY NVA FORCES IN TOWN OF PAKSONG ON BOLOVENS PLATEAU IN 1971, AND WAS RELEASED SEVERAL MONTHS LATER. HE REMAINED IN SOUTH LAOS AND HAS GOOD CONTACTS IN PL ZONE.) BANGKOK POST ITEM ASSERTED THAT FILLOUX AND YOUNG FEMALE VIETNAMESE (NOT LAO) COMPANION WENT TO FATHER ANDRE'S MISSION REQUESTING HIS ASSISTANCE IN ENTERING CAMBODIA. HE ATTEMPTED TO DISSUADE THEM, POINTING OUT THAT HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE SAFE TREATMENT BY KHMER ROUGE. HOWEVER, FACED WITH THEIR INSISTANCE, HE ESCORTED THEM ALONG ROUTE 13 AND WATCHED THEM CROSS CAMBODIAN BORDER. ROUTE 13 IS SAFE FOR TRAVEL FROM KHONG ISLAND FERRY LANDING TO CAMBODIAN BORDER; SEVERAL EMBASSY OFFICERS TRAVELLED ON THIS ROAD IN DECEMBER 1973.

4. ON MAY 20, FRENCH EMBASSY MILITARY ATTACHE LABOUCHEIX CALLED ON DCM CHAPMAN TO PASS ON REPORT HE HAD HEARD FROM INFORMANT IN SOUTH LAOS THAT "TWO AMERICANS" HAD BEEN SEEN IN ALLEGED PRISONER CAMP IN NORTH CAMBODIA. LABOUCHEIX HAD OBTAINED THIS INFORMATION WHILE ENQUIRING INTO DISAPPEARANCE OF FILLOUX. LABOUCHEIX SAID FILLOUX WANTED TO GET INTO CAMBODIAN TERRITORY TO DO A STORY SIMILAR TO THAT HE HAD DONE LAST YEAR HERE ON PATHET LAO. INFORMANT TOLD HIM FILLOUX WAS BEING HELD IN CAMP IN NORTH CAMBODIA. REFERENCE C REPORTS FULL DETAILS OF CHAPMAN/LABOUCHEIX CONVERSATION AND WAS DISSEMINATED TO DEPARTMENT (EA/LC), CDR JCRC NKP AND EMBASSY PHNOM PENH.

5. USIS OFFICER GOT IN TOUCH WITH CASAUX MAY 13 TO PROBE FOR MORE DETAILS ON STORY AS REQUESTED REF A. CASAUX SAID HE NOW BELIEVES FILLOUX WAS EXECUTED BY KHMER ROUGE IN EARLY MAY. CASAUX RETURNED FROM TRIP TO PAKSE TWO DAYS AGO, WHERE HE WAS TOLD OF FILLOUX'S ALLEGED DEATH BY FATHER ANDRE, TWO INDEPENDENT VILLAGE SOURCES, AND DEFENSE MINISTER SISOUK NA CHAMPASSAK WHO HAD RECEIVED RLGAFF REPORT ON SUBJECT WHILE IN SOUTH LAOS. CONFIDENTIAL

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VIETNAMESE GIRL IS REPORTEDLY STILL ALIVE.

6. EMBOFF CALLED ICRC REP. ZENGER MAY 13 TO DETERMINE STATUS OF HIS ENQUITY TO PATHET LAO. ZENGER SAID PATHET LAO HAD TOLD HIM "OFFICIALLY" THAT FILLOUX WAS NOT IN THEIR ZONE AND THAT THEY COULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN MATTER. ZENGER CONTINUED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD "UNOFFICIAL" INFORMATION FROM RELIABLE SOURCE THAT FILLOUX AND GIRL

WERE "ALIVE AND WELL IN SMALL VILLAGE JUST SOUTH OF
CAMBODIAN FRONTIER." ACCORDING TO ZENGER, THIS
SOURCE INDICATED THAT FILLOUX'S CAPTORS WERE "CHECKING HIS
BONAFIDES AND WOULD RELEASE HIM WHEN CHECK WAS COMPLETED."
ZENGER WOULD NOT DISCLOSE WHETHER THIS "UNOFFICIAL
INFORMATION" WAS ALSO OBTAINED FROM PATHET LAO SOURCE.

7. AT THIS POINT, FILLOUX'S STATUS AND WHEREABOUTS ARE
THUS SUBJECT TO CONFLICTING INFORMATION. GIVEN AFP AND
ICRC INVOLVEMENT IN CASE, EMBASSY PLANS TO FOLLOW IT
CLOSELY BUT TAKE NO OTHER ACTION.
CHAPMAN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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